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Resolution adopted by the General Assembly

[*on the report of the Fifth Committee (A/59/650)*]

59/266. Human resources management

The General Assembly,

Recalling Articles 8, 97, 100 and 101 of the Charter of the United Nations,

Recalling also its resolutions 49/222 A and B of 23 December 1994 and 20 July 1995, 51/226 of 3 April 1997, 52/219 of 22 December 1997, 52/252 of 8 September 1998, 53/221 of 7 April 1999, 55/258 of 14 June 2001, 57/305 of 15 April 2003 and 58/296 of 18 June 2004, as well as its other relevant resolutions and decisions,

Having considered the relevant reports on human resources management questions submitted to the General Assembly for its consideration[1] and the related report of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions,[2]

I

Human resources management reform

1. *Reaffirms* the principles set out in sections I and II of its resolution 53/221 and section I of its resolution 55/258 concerning human resources management and the role of the Office of Human Resources Management of the Secretariat;

2. *Affirms* that the Office of Human Resources Management shall remain the central authority within the Secretariat for the interpretation and enforcement of the Staff Regulations and Rules, without prejudice to regulation 12.3;

3. *Stresses* the crucial importance of a transparent and timely flow of information from the Secretariat to Member States in matters related to human resources management reform;

[1] A/58/283, A/58/666, A/58/704, A/59/65-E/2004/48 and Add.1, A/59/152, A/59/211, A/59/213, A/59/217, A/59/222, A/59/253, A/59/263 and Add.1 and 2, A/59/264, A/59/291, A/59/299, A/59/357, A/59/388, A/C.5/58/L.13 and A/C.5/59/4.

[2] A/59/446.

4. *Requests* the Secretary-General in future reports on mandated human resources management reform to include full information on achievements and the impact of its implementation;

5. *Stresses* that any proposals for changes in the building blocks of reform should be accompanied by transparent information for Member States on those changes;

6. *Recalls* section VII of its resolution 55/258, in which the General Assembly, inter alia, requested the Secretary-General to ensure that well-designed mechanisms of accountability are put in place before delegating authority to programme managers;

7. *Stresses* the need to ensure that adequate mechanisms are in place to ensure the accountability of programme managers for the implementation of human resources policies and the achievement of objectives contained in human resources action plans;

8. *Emphasizes* that effective accountability mechanisms are an integral and essential element of human resources management reform, and requests the Secretary-General to strengthen such mechanisms throughout the Organization;

9. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to improve the effectiveness of human resources action plans for achieving the human resources objectives of the Organization, including with respect to equitable geographical distribution and gender representation, as mandated by the General Assembly, and further requests him to report thereon to the Assembly at its sixty-first session;

10. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to reconstitute the Accountability Panel so as to strengthen the internal system of accountability, including with respect to human resources policies and objectives, and to ensure that the Panel has the authority necessary to hold programme managers accountable for their performance in achieving the objectives contained in human resources action plans;

11. *Stresses* that the staff selection system must provide transparency and fairness;

12. *Emphasizes* the importance of the participation of staff representatives in the work of the central review bodies, and requests the Secretary-General and invites staff representatives to engage in a consultative process with a view to resuming the participation of staff representatives in the work of the central review bodies;

13. *Requests* the Secretary-General to make every effort to ensure that the central review bodies discharge fully and effectively their roles in the staff selection system, as foreseen in annex II to the report of the Secretary-General entitled "Human resources management reform"[3] and subsequently approved by the General Assembly in its resolution 55/258, including by addressing the deficiencies identified in the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services,[4] and to make proposals to amend the terms of reference of the central review bodies as necessary in the light of experience;

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[3] A/55/253 and Corr.1.

[4] See A/59/253.

14. *Recalls its request* to the Secretary-General contained in section II, paragraph 2, of its resolution 51/226, as reiterated in section IV, paragraph 10, of its resolution 53/221, section VII of its resolution 55/258 and section III of its resolution 57/305, to enhance managerial accountability with respect to human resources management decisions, including imposing sanctions in cases of demonstrated mismanagement of staff and wilful neglect of, or disregard for, established rules and procedures, while safeguarding the right of due process of all staff members, including managers, and requests the Secretary-General to report comprehensively thereon to it at its sixty-first session;

15. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue his efforts, as described in paragraphs 130 to 132 of his report,[5] to report to the General Assembly on the experiences gained in the implementation of such measures and to make additional proposals for action by the Assembly as appropriate;

16. *Notes with concern* paragraph 91 of the report of the Secretary-General,[5] and requests the Secretary-General to reassess the situation;

II

Recruitment and placement

1. *Requests* the Secretary-General to ensure that the highest standards of efficiency, competence and integrity serve as the paramount consideration in the employment of staff, with due regard for the principle of equitable geographical distribution, in accordance with Article 101, paragraph 3, of the Charter of the United Nations;

2. *Recognizes* the value of a transparent process of recruitment, placement and promotion in the Organization;

3. *Notes* the proposal of the Secretary-General,[6] on the recommendation of the Office of Internal Oversight Services,[7] to reduce the time required for advertising a vacancy from 60 to 45 days, and decides to revert to this issue in the context of a comprehensive study addressing all factors contributing to the process of selection, recruitment and placement at its sixty-first session;

4. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue his efforts to reduce the period required to fill vacancies by addressing all factors contributing to delays in the process of selection, recruitment and placement and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its sixty-first session;

5. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to continue to maintain a system of circulating printed copies of all vacancy announcements, in accordance with its resolution 57/305, for distribution to all delegations, except those which indicate otherwise;

6. *Reaffirms* the need to respect the equality of each of the two working languages of the Secretariat, reaffirms also the use of additional working languages in specific duty stations as mandated, and in this regard requests the Secretary-General to ensure that vacancy announcements specify the need for either of the

[5] A/59/263.

[6] Ibid., para. 189.

[7] A/59/253, para. 103.

working languages of the Secretariat unless the functions of the post require a specific working language;

7. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report on the definition of language posts to the General Assembly at its sixty-first session in the context of his report on the composition of the Secretariat;

8. *Expresses its concern* over the deficiencies in the recruitment of international civilian staff in peacekeeping missions as referred to by the Office of Internal Oversight Services in its report,[5] and requests the Secretary-General to make efforts to rectify the situation and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its sixty-first session;

9. *Notes with concern* the range of weaknesses related to the Galaxy support tool identified by the Office of Internal Oversight Services in its report;[4]

10. *Requests* the Secretary-General to fully develop the Galaxy support tool and make it more efficient and user-friendly for the purpose of efficient recruitment, as embodied in Article 101 of the Charter, and to ensure that all applicants are informed about the final result of their applications in a timely fashion;

11. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to ensure the conversion of all printed applications into electronic form upon their submission for inclusion in the Galaxy system and to ensure that those applications are considered in the filling of advertised vacancies, and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its sixty-first session;

12. *Further requests* the Secretary-General to continue to develop screening mechanisms that ensure that all applications submitted in the Galaxy system are treated fairly, that well-qualified candidates are given due consideration and that keywords outside of the vacancy announcements are not used to exclude well-qualified candidates;

13. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to take the steps necessary to ensure that Galaxy is available in both of the working languages of the Organization;

14. *Reiterates its requests* to the Secretary-General to inform Member States monthly, through the Internet, through the United Nations public web site and, upon request, in printed form of appointments made;

III

National competitive examination and General Service to Professional examination

1. *Reiterates its decision* that the recruitment of qualified staff from the General Service to the Professional category should be limited to the P-1 and P-2 levels and should be permitted for up to 10 per cent of the appointments at those levels;

2. *Authorizes* the Secretary-General to appoint to posts not subject to geographical distribution at the P-2 level up to seven successful candidates from the General Service to Professional examination each year;

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[5] See A/59/152.

3. *Also authorizes* the Secretary-General to appoint to P-2 posts in duty stations with chronically high vacancy rates up to three successful candidates from the General Service to Professional examination each year when no successful candidates from the national competitive examination are available;

4. *Requests* the Secretary-General to make special efforts to appoint to the relevant vacant posts in the Secretariat successful candidates from unrepresented and underrepresented Member States who have passed the national competitive examination;

5. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to ensure the expeditious placement in appropriate posts of as many candidates as feasible who have been placed on the roster following the successful completion of national competitive examinations;

6. *Reiterates* section II, paragraph 43, of its resolution 57/305, and requests the Secretary-General to apply strictly the relevant administrative instruction for recruitment at the P-3 level and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its sixty-first session;

IV

Measures to improve equitable geographical distribution

1. *Notes with appreciation* the progress made since 1994 in reducing the number of countries that are unrepresented and underrepresented;

2. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue his ongoing efforts to attain equitable geographical distribution in the Secretariat and to ensure as wide a geographical distribution of staff as possible in all main departments and offices of the Secretariat;

3. *Welcomes* the continuing efforts of the Secretary-General to improve the situation of unrepresented and underrepresented Member States and of those in danger of becoming underrepresented under the system of desirable ranges;

4. *Notes* the low percentage of appointments of staff from unrepresented and underrepresented Member States to posts subject to geographical distribution in 2004;

5. *Notes with concern* the decline in the proportion of nationals of developing countries in posts at the senior and policy-making levels of the Secretariat;

6. *Reiterates its request* that the Secretary-General take all measures necessary to ensure, at the senior and policy-making levels of the Secretariat, equitable representation of Member States, especially those with inadequate representation at those levels, including unrepresented and underrepresented States, in particular developing countries, in accordance with the relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, and to continue to include relevant information thereon in all future reports on the composition of the Secretariat;

7. *Notes* that the system of geographic ranges was designed to apply to countries rather than regions or groups;

8. *Recalls* section II, paragraph 30, of its resolution 57/305, and reiterates its request that the Secretary-General include an analysis of the level of underrepresentation in his next report on the composition of the Secretariat;

9. *Authorizes* the Secretary-General, for a trial period of two years during which the procedures would be fully developed, to establish a special roster of candidates from unrepresented and underrepresented Member States, as proposed in paragraphs 21 and 22 of his report,[9] for a number of posts at the P-4 and P-5 levels only, until such Member States are within the desirable ranges, and requests the Secretary-General to report thereon to the General Assembly at its sixty-first session;

10. *Welcomes* the practice of conducting recruitment missions to unrepresented and underrepresented Member States, and requests the Secretary-General to intensify those efforts in order to increase the number of recruits from those Member States after going through the regular recruitment procedures for advertised vacancies;

11. *Reiterates its request* contained in section II, paragraph 29, of its resolution 57/305 that the Secretary-General set specific targets as well as develop a programme for achieving equitable geographical representation;

12. *Notes* the number of overrepresented countries under the system of desirable ranges, and requests the Secretary-General to provide the General Assembly with analytical information on this issue in the framework of his report on the composition of the Secretariat;

13. *Reaffirms* that, in accordance with its resolutions 41/206 B of 11 December 1986, 53/221, 55/258 and 57/305, no post should be considered the exclusive preserve of any Member State or group of States, including at the highest levels, and reiterates its request that the Secretary-General ensure that, as a general rule, no national of a Member State succeeds a national of that State in a senior post and that there is no monopoly on senior posts by nationals of any State or group of States, and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its sixty-first session;

V

System of equitable geographical distribution

1. *Reiterates its request* that the Secretary-General, as approved in its resolution 42/220 A of 21 December 1987, fully reach the level of posts subject to geographical distribution, which currently stands at 2,783;

2. *Also reiterates its request* that the Secretary-General submit the report requested in section IX, paragraph 2, of its resolution 57/305, which will include an assessment of the issues related to possible changes in the number of posts subject to the system of geographical distribution, and requests the Secretary-General to submit the report to the General Assembly by the second part of its resumed fifty-ninth session;

3. *Recalls* section IX, paragraph 1, of its resolution 57/305, and decides to revert to this subject at its sixty-first session;

4. *Requests* the Board of Auditors to conduct an audit of the implementation of the principle of equitable geographical representation in the Secretariat at all levels, as set out in relevant resolutions of the General Assembly, and to verify the application of established measures of transparency and accountability at all levels

[9] A/59/264

of the selection, recruitment and placement process in compliance with relevant resolutions of the Assembly;

5. *Also requests* the Board of Auditors to submit its findings and recommendations to the General Assembly at its sixty-first session for consideration and action;

VI

Gender representation

1. *Reaffirms* the goal of 50/50 gender distribution in all categories of posts within the United Nations system, especially at the senior and policy-making levels, with full respect for the principle of equitable geographical distribution, in conformity with Article 101 of the Charter, and regrets that progress towards attaining this goal has been slow;

2. *Expresses concern* at the continuing low proportion of women in the Secretariat, in particular the low proportion among them of women from developing countries, especially at the senior levels, and stresses that the continuing lack of representation or underrepresentation of women from certain countries, in particular from developing countries, should be taken into account and that those women should be accorded equal opportunities in the recruitment process, in full conformity with relevant resolutions;

3. *Notes with concern* that, in posts subject to the system of desirable ranges, 26 women from developing countries were recruited between 1 July 2003 and 30 June 2004 among the 86 women appointed during that period;

4. *Requests* the Secretary-General to increase his efforts to attain and monitor the goal of gender parity in the Secretariat, in particular at senior levels, and in this context to ensure that women, especially those from developing countries and countries with economies in transition, are appropriately represented within the Secretariat, and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its sixty-first session;

5. *Also requests* the Secretary-General, in the context of attaining this goal, to develop and implement recruitment targets, time frames for meeting those targets and accountability measures;

6. *Further requests* the Secretary-General to clarify the role of departmental focal points, including in the context of the staff selection system, and their participation in the development and monitoring of the departmental human resource action plans;

7. *Encourages* Member States to support the efforts of the Secretary-General by identifying more women candidates and encouraging them to apply for appointment to positions in the Secretariat and by creating awareness among their nationals, particularly women, of vacancies in the Secretariat;

VII

Post structure

Requests the Secretary-General to make proposals to the General Assembly, as appropriate, to reform the post structure with a view to considering a possible increase in the proportion of P-2 and P-3 posts, taking advantage of the opportunity provided by the retirement of many senior staff in the coming years;

VIII

Mobility

1. *Reaffirms* section V of its resolution 55/258, as well as the segment on mobility contained in section II of its resolution 57/305, and notes its previous requests to the Secretary-General in this regard;

2. *Stresses*, in this regard, that when implementing mobility policies, the Secretary-General should ensure that:

(*a*) Mobility does not negatively affect the continuity and the quality of services and the institutional memory and capacity of the Organization;

(*b*) Mobility does not lead to the transfer or abolition of posts as a result of vacancies;

(*c*) Mobility has a positive impact in filling existing high vacancy rates at some United Nations duty stations and regional commissions;

(*d*) There is a clear differentiation between mobility within duty stations and mobility across duty stations and that the latter is a more important factor in career development;

(*e*) Mobility is encouraged for all posts in the Professional and higher categories;

3. *Notes* that the implementation of mobility policies, while recognizing their anticipated positive effects, may also give rise to problems and challenges that should be addressed;

4. *Requests* the Secretary-General to take the steps necessary to ensure that mobility is not used as an instrument of coercion against staff and to ensure that appropriate monitoring and accountability measures are in place;

5. *Notes* the measures to facilitate the implementation of mobility policies set out in paragraph 85 of the report of the Secretary-General,[5] and requests the Secretary-General to develop a strategic plan with indicators, benchmarks, time lines and clear criteria for the implementation of mobility policies and to report thereon, including with information on the financial implications, to the General Assembly at its sixty-first session for its consideration and action in order to solve any problems;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to continue to consult with staff in the development of mobility policies;

7. *Requests* the International Civil Service Commission, within its mandate, to keep under review the question of mobility in the United Nations common system, including its implications for career development, and to make recommendations to the General Assembly, as appropriate, in the context of its annual reports;

8. *Requests* the Secretary-General to consider the use of incentives with a view to encouraging staff to move to duty stations with chronically high vacancy rates;

9. *Reiterates* section II, paragraph 51, of its resolution 57/305, in which the General Assembly encouraged the Secretary-General to expedite, as appropriate, agreements between the Secretariat and the United Nations funds and programmes

and the specialized agencies for all staff levels in relation to mobility, and requests the Secretary-General to report thereon to the Assembly at its sixty-first session;

10. *Invites* host countries, as appropriate, to review their policies for granting work permits to spouses of United Nations staff;

11. *Invites* the Secretary-General to continue to explore ways of assisting spouses to find employment opportunities, in consultation with host Governments where necessary, including by taking measures to expedite the issuance of work permits;

12. *Acknowledges* that mobility needs to be supported through greater efforts to improve conditions of life and work at the various duty stations;

IX

Contractual arrangements

Takes note of the report of the Secretary-General on contractual arrangements,[10] and decides to revert to the issue at its sixtieth session in the context of its consideration of the report of the International Civil Service Commission on contractual arrangements with a view to taking a decision;

X

Use of appointments under the 100 and 300 series of the Staff Rules in the staffing of field missions

1. *Decides* to continue to suspend the application of the four-year maximum limit for appointments of limited duration under the 300 series of the Staff Rules in peacekeeping operations until 30 June 2005;

2. *Authorizes* the Secretary-General, bearing in mind paragraph 1 above, to reappoint under the 100 series of the Staff Rules those mission staff whose service under 300-series contracts has reached the four-year limit by 31 December 2004 or later, pending a decision by the General Assembly, provided that their functions have been reviewed and found necessary and their performance has been confirmed as fully satisfactory, and requests him to report thereon to the General Assembly at the second part of its resumed fifty-ninth session;

3. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit proposals for which functions are relevant for reappointment under the 100 series for consideration and action by the General Assembly at the second part of its resumed fifty-ninth session;

4. *Also requests* the Secretary-General to continue the practice of using 300 series contracts as the primary instrument for the appointment of new mission staff, pending a decision by the General Assembly on the report requested above;

5. *Requests* the International Civil Service Commission, as a matter of high priority, to review the contractual instruments available for the employment of common system staff in the field, including the practice of conversion to the 100 series from other contractual arrangements, and requests the Commission to present an analysis to the General Assembly at its sixty-first session of the desirability and feasibility of harmonizing conditions of service in the field,

[10] A/59/263/Add.1

including at non-family duty stations, and to provide full details of the financial implications;

6. *Requests* the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly at its sixty-first session a comprehensive report with proposals for conditions of field service addressing, inter alia, the feasibility and desirability of conditions of service distinct to peacekeeping operations and the feasibility and desirability of harmonized conditions of field service in the United Nations;

7. *Recognizes* the authority of the Secretary-General to assign and deploy staff according to the operational needs of the Organization, and requests him to limit the assignment of staff, in particular General Service staff, from Headquarters and other established offices to field missions unless required by operational necessity or the unavailability of requisite skills in local labour markets.

XI

Consultants and individual contractors

1. *Endorses* the observations and recommendations of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions contained in paragraphs 59 to 61 of its report,[2] and requests the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its sixty-first session on the use of consultants and individual contractors, including actions taken to improve the monitoring capacity of the Office of Human Resources Management on this issue;

2. *Reaffirms* that consultants shall not perform functions of staff members of the Organization or have any representative or supervisory responsibility;

3. *Reiterates* that the Secretary-General should refrain from using consultants to carry out functions assigned to established posts and that consultants should be hired only in strict accordance with existing rules and relevant General Assembly resolutions and where expertise is not available within the Organization;

4. *Also reiterates* that in areas where consultants are frequently hired for a period of more than one year, the Secretary-General should submit proposals, where necessary, for the establishment of posts and should report thereon to the General Assembly at its sixty-first session.

XII

Employment of retired former staff

1. *Notes with concern* the increased use of retired former staff members in substantive areas and in decision-making positions;

2. *Also notes with concern* that the lack of proper succession planning has a negative impact on the rejuvenation of the Organization and on attaining core human resources targets;

3. *Endorses* the views expressed by the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions in paragraphs 63 and 65 of its report;[2]

4. *Reiterates its request* to the Secretary-General to ensure that the employment of retired former staff has no adverse effects on the career planning and mobility of other United Nations staff members;

5. *Requests* the Secretary-General to have recourse to the employment of retired former staff only if the operational requirements of the Organization cannot be met by existing staff;

6. *Stresses* that the hiring of retired former staff should be on an exceptional basis, and in this regard encourages the Secretary-General to fill vacant posts at senior and decision-making levels through the established staff selection process;

7. *Requests* the Secretary-General to report to the General Assembly at its sixty-first session on the use of retired former staff and to develop clear criteria for the selection of the retired former staff, in particular in the Professional category;

XIII

Study of availability of skills in local labour markets

Having considered the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services on the availability in local labour markets of the skills for which international recruitment for General Service staff takes place,[11]

1. *Requests* the Secretary-General to conduct a study on the availability of skills in local labour markets for which international recruitment for General Service staff takes place and, drawing on the findings, to reassess the determination made in 1975 that recruitment from outside the area of the duty station is necessary to staff the text-processing units, bearing in mind the need for the highest standards of quality relevant to the language function, and to report to the General Assembly at its sixtieth session;

2. *Decides* to revert to its consideration of the issue and of the report of the Office of Internal Oversight Services[11] at its sixtieth session in the context of its consideration of the report requested in paragraph 1 above;

XIV

Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights

1. *Welcomes* the report of the Joint Inspection Unit on its management review of the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights,[12] and notes the observations of the Secretary-General on the report and the actions of the Office to implement the recommendations of the Joint Inspection Unit;[13]

2. *Emphasizes* that recruitment in the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights should be done in full consultation with and under the guidance of the Office of Human Resources Management, consistent with the provisions of the present resolution and other relevant legislative mandates;

3. *Notes* that the Joint Inspection Unit will submit a follow-up report on this issue to the General Assembly at its sixty-first session for consideration under relevant agenda items;

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[11] See A/59/388.

[12] See A/59/65-E/2004/48.

[13] See A/59/65/Add.1-E/2004/48/Add.1.

XV

Measures to prevent discrimination

1. *Takes note* of the report of the Secretary-General on measures to prevent discrimination on the basis of nationality, race, gender, religion or language in the United Nations,[14] and requests him to develop further measures, as necessary, in cooperation with the Office of Internal Oversight Services and the Joint Inspection Unit, to prevent such discrimination, in accordance with the principles of the Charter and the provisions of the Staff Regulations and Rules of the United Nations, and to report thereon to the General Assembly at its sixty-first session;

2. *Decides* to revert to the consideration of the report of the Secretary-General[14] in the context of the agenda item entitled "Administration of justice at the United Nations" during the first part of its resumed fifty-ninth session;

XVI

Staff-management consultations

1. *Takes note* of the views expressed by staff representatives in the Fifth Committee, stresses the importance of a meaningful dialogue on human resources management issues between staff and management, and calls upon both parties to intensify efforts to overcome differences and to resume the consultative process;

2. *Reiterates its requests* that the Secretary-General take into account the views of staff representatives, in accordance with article VIII of the Staff Regulations and Rules and resolution 35/213 of 17 December 1980;

XVII

Other matters

1. *Stresses* that all administrative issuances of the Secretary-General related to the implementation of resolutions and decisions of the General Assembly shall be in full compliance with such resolutions and decisions and shall be reported to the Assembly in conformity with the established regulations, rules and procedures;

2. *Reaffirms* that, in accordance with staff regulation 1.2, staff members shall not be actively associated with the management of, or hold a financial interest in, any profit-making, business or other concern if it were possible for the staff member or the profit-making, business or other concern to benefit from such association or financial interest by reason of his or her position with the United Nations;

XVIII

Reporting

Requests the Secretary-General to submit to the General Assembly for consideration at its sixty-first session consolidated reports, as appropriate, on the results of the implementation of the present resolution.

76th plenary meeting
23 December 2004

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[14] A/59/211.